

Poems

UC-NRLF



\$B 255 800

BY
JANE BUDGE



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2007 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

POEMS.

BY

JANE BUDGE,

*Author of "Our Country's Story," "Great Events in
England's History," &c.*

LONDON:

SAML. HARRIS & CO., 5, BISHOPSGATE WITHOUT.

1877.

LOAN STACK

~~429F~~

E. Bellamy

PR4266
B44A17
1877

NOTHING is claimed for these thoughts in poetry—which sometimes seem to their author like echoes of better tones—but their reality. The pleasure and refreshment which have frequently been found by the writer in the strains of humble poets, encourage the hope that a few readers may find the same in these.

TO
JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER.

NO STRANGER—though we ne'er met face to face,
Though never written line did message trace
Between us ; yet not strange, since I too dare
To claim—though most unworthy—a child's share
In the dear Fathers of our faith, who bore
Their cross so boldly in the days of yore ;
And more—that through that Heaven-sent gift of
thine
Thy mind and soul have spoken unto mine ;
Therefore as to a friend I come to-day,
This little offering in thy hand I lay—
Not wholly worthless, since even wayside flowers
May diffuse fragrance for a few short hours.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
Infancy	I
The Graves of Franklin's Sailors	5
The Noble Army of Martyrs	8
December 15th, 1861: the omission of the Prince Consort's name in the Liturgy	11
Moses' Prayer (Deut. iii. 23-27)	14
Garibaldi: April 26th, 1864 (Par, Cornwall)	17
"Ye have done it unto Me"	19
West Lavington, April 6th, 1865 (Richard Cobden's funeral day)	24
Cowper's Last Words	27
Blake's Return	30
To any Happy Baby	33
Lines	36
The Untried Voyage	39
Bethany	43
Scattered and Gathered	45
Franklin's Fate	51
A Reminiscence	53
Mary Magdalene	56
The Captive Sea-Gull	59
The Visible and Invisible	61
A Deserted House... ..	65
Lines on a Picture in the Royal Academy (1862)	67
William Forster	69

The New Year (1871)	...	...	...	...	72
The Pelican	...	...	...	...	74
Livingstone's Funeral	...	...	...	...	76
Pilate's Wife	...	...	...	...	78
Called Higher	...	...	...	...	83
The Lost Angel	...	...	...	...	85
Peter	...	...	...	...	91
The Gift of Life	...	...	...	...	93
The German Emigrant	...	...	...	...	95
The Lost Atlantis	...	...	...	...	99
"His tender mercies are over all His works"	...	...	...	...	103
Perpetua Constantia	...	...	...	...	104
The Bereaved Mother	...	...	...	...	107
To the Memory of W. C.	...	...	...	...	117
"Like as a Father pitieth"	...	...	...	...	122
Rugby Chapel	...	...	...	...	124
"It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late"	...	...	...	...	125
"Increase our faith"	...	...	...	...	127
"Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee"	...	...	...	...	129
"I will give you a mouth and wisdom"	...	...	...	...	133
Bunsen's Dying Words	...	...	...	...	135
A Pagan Creed in a Christian Land	...	...	...	...	136
A Question	...	...	...	...	139
To the Young rejoicing in their youth	...	...	...	...	141
In Memoriam	...	...	...	...	143
NOTES	...	...	...	...	144

P O E M S.



INFANCY.

A THOUSAND forms are bending now
Above the cradle-bed !
A thousand footsteps soft and low
Around it gently tread !
A thousand voices tenderly
Sing cradle-songs of love,
That blend in dreams of infancy
With angel-songs above !

Within the rich man's nursery,
In costly robes array'd,
Watch'd by affection faithfully,
The slumbering babe is laid ;
And by the poor man's lowly hearth
A love as pure and deep,
Born with the helpless stranger's birth,
Guardeth its holy sleep..

Scarce think we while we gaze upon
A fragile new-born life,
It shall gird manhood's armour on,
And mingle in its strife.
For even as a sealèd book
Are that young heart and brain ;
Who traceth in the mountain-brook
The flood that swells the main ?

Yet Time hath in his clasp a scroll
Writ with that history true,
And line by line he will unroll
That we may read it too.
Oh ! well for some whose arms to-day
Around the infant lie,
That Mercy's hand doth overlay
Thy page, Futurity !

They who our destinies control,
Of regal mind, not birth ;
The men of intellect, and soul,
The uncrown'd kings of earth ;
A few years since no mortal ken,
Not even a mother's, guess'd
The future glory slumbering then
Upon her quiet breast.

Yet 'neath the infant brow there lay
All years could bring to light,
As in the faintest dawn of day
Promise of noontide bright ;
And they who shall some time be great,
They for whose smooth, fair brow,
The shining wreaths of honour wait,
Sleep in the cradle now.

A precious gem that is not set,
A fair, but fruitless tree,
A pearl within its shell as yet,—
So seems a child to be :
The glorious gift of life it hath,
To use or to abuse ;
And thro' the world it has a path,
As yet untrod, to choose.

But ceaselessly it journeyeth
From Childhood's realm away ;
Its goal the silent land of Death,
It ne'er will pause or stay.
Oh ! we have left far, far behind
That bright and sunny shore !
Shall neither wave nor favouring wind
Bear back our bark once more ?

They may—we, who so hastily
 Leave Childhood's balmy plain,
If we would heavenly glory see
 Must travel back again ;
Those paths of infancy retrace
 The feet of Jesus trod,
If we would ever see His face
 Before the throne of God.



THE GRAVES OF FRANKLIN'S SAILORS.

“The graves next attracted our attention ; they, like all the English seamen construct, were scrupulously neat. Go where you will over the globe’s surface, afar in the East, or afar in the West, down amongst the coral-girded isles of the South sea, or here where the grim North frowns on the sailor’s grave, you will always find it alike ; it is the monument raised by rough hands but affectionate hearts over the last home of their messmate ; it breathes of the quiet churchyard in some of England’s many nooks, where each had formed his idea of what was due to departed worth ; and the ornaments that Nature decks herself with even in the desolation of the Frozen Zone, were carefully culled to mark the dead seamen’s home. I thought I traced in the epitaphs over the graves of the men from the *Erebus*, the manly and Christian spirit of Franklin. In the true spirit of chivalry he, the captain and leader, led them amidst dangers and unknown difficulties, with iron will stamped upon his brow, but the words of meekness, gentleness, and truth were his device. We have seen his career, and we know his deeds !”—*Stray Leaves from an Arctic Journal*.

WE sought in vain for that lost band across the
sparkling waves,
We found them not on sea or land, only three quiet
graves—

As English look'd they 'neath that cold and leaden
Polar sky,
As if their own land's sunset gold shone o'er them
from on high.

We thought how scenes like this would greet our
eyes the wide world o'er,
How English graves, like English feet, are printing
every shore—
Beneath the fervid Tropic sun where Southern
waters roll,
And here, icebound, and chill, and lone, fast by the
Northern Pole.

We thought of England's churchyards fair,—the
carved and mossy stone,
The graves of generations there, and then these
seem'd so lone,
So lone, so desolate,—and yet it matter'd not to
those
Whose sun of life, thus early set, lay there in calm
repose.

We knew the icebergs there might crash, and echo
thro' the sky,
And the stormy billows wildly dash, and rear them-
selves on high;

But we knew that nought could break the sleep
which God had sealed so sound,
For earthly waking far too deep, too holy and profound.

There was no voice, no answering tone, and yet we
seem'd to hold
With that brave band communion thro' those
graves so still and cold,
For they before had knelt in tears where we in tears
knelt now,
O'erthrown the barrier of years we seem'd to share
their woe.

We sought in vain for that lost band across the
sparkling waves,
We found them not on sea or land—only three quiet
graves—
The fate of Franklin and his crew was dark as
heretofore,
Save that this much at last we knew—the toils of
three were o'er.



THE NOBLE ARMY OF MARTYRS.

How have they died—the glorious host
 Who marched to conquest on,
 And heeded not how fierce the strife
 So that the day was won?—
 Was it amid applauding throngs
 They laid them down to die?—
 Full oft Derision's shout hath been
 Their cry of victory :

The pathway to their throne been pav'd
 With anguish and unrest,
 The scaffold been the earthly court
 Their kingly footsteps press'd;
 Their diadem the circling flames
 That twin'd their brow around;—
 Yet such—of all earth's conquerors
 Have been most grandly crown'd.

They have pour'd forth their holy blood
 Like fertilizing rain;
 The desert places have rejoiced,
 And borne rich fruit again—

From battlefields, from dungeon floors
Its voice still cries aloud
Of those who ne'er to tyranny
Their stately necks have bow'd.

This land is full of "hallow'd ground,"
For wheresoe'er we tread
Its dust is mingling with *their* dust
Among the silent dead—
From age to age comes down to us,
A vast and rich bequest
Of lofty names and memories
In robes of martyrs drest.

We shudder to recall the times
Of darkness and of gloom,
When to our country's first and best
Her offering was a tomb ;—
Those days are gone, for ever gone—
Freedom and truth have stood
Conquerors among us—tho', alas !
With garments roll'd in blood.

Those days are gone—yet (Heaven be prais'd !)
The spirit is not dead,
Which, marching ever in the van,
That noble army led ;—

Martyrs may be—and yet no stake,
No scaffold rais'd on high,
No thronging crowd to marvel how
The faithful dared to die.

They may walk on unseen, unmark'd
Of earth, to meet their doom,
And none but God and angels know
Where lies the martyr's tomb.
Oh ! while we bless with reverent love,
Those who have pass'd away,
Let not our blindness overlook
The martyrs of to-day.

For some who sanctify the past
To graves unblest were sent ;
Their age received them not, but we
Have built their monument—
A work our fathers left to us,
But we may well beware
Lest we bequeath to future times
The same sad, holy care.



DECEMBER 15TH, 1861.

THE OMISSION OF THE PRINCE CONSORT'S NAME IN
THE LITURGY.

STRANGE doth that silence fall—
Like sweep of funeral pall
Trailing across the church's hollow floor ;
How one unspoken word,
One name no longer heard,
Thrills to the heart—*he* needeth prayer no more.

What means it ? that for him
Whose sight no more is dim,
Men may not ask Heaven would his eyes illumine ;
For thee—O stricken one,
It means thy light is gone,
Quench'd in the awful darkness of the tomb.

Upon thy maiden brow
They set the crown, but now,
The Wife and Mother wore it gracefully ;
No dimness clouds its light,
Still is that circlet bright—
But O, crown'd Widow, what are crowns to thee !

Amidst the weary weight
Of glory and of state,
The loneliness that doth engird a throne—
The children of thy line,
Thy Country's more than thine,
One priceless heart at least was all thine own.

No prayer for him again !
The long-familiar strain,
Is hushed upon men's lips—how suddenly—
He needeth it no more :
But O, *thy* need is sore—
No prayer for him, but ceaseless prayer for thee.

Take comfort in the thought
His battle has been fought,
And Honour's banner waves his bier above ;
He may not fall away,
There is no future day
Can rise on him less worthy of thy love.

Take thy hard Cross, and bow
Beneath its burden now,
So best thou'lt bear the weight, God knows, not
light,

Until thou shalt lay down
Alike the Cross and Crown,
The purple for the robe "exceeding white."

It must be well for us
That grief should move us thus,
Binding in sympathy the hearts of all,
Causing the tears to rise
To unaccustomed eyes
In lonely cottage and in stately hall.

No prayer hence may he claim,
Yet hath that silenced name
A power unknown before our hearts to move,
Bidding with tenfold care
To guard and shelter Her,
Folding Her round with depths of loyal love.



MOSES' PRAYER.

(DEUT. III. 23-27.)

THE weary, toilsome desert wandering o'er,
 A mighty host stand upon Jordan's shore;
 The goodly land is spread before their eyes,
 Which their rebellious hearts had dared despise.

The princely leader of that murmuring band
 At last lifts for *himself* a suppliant hand—
 From the high heart is wrung the imploring cry—
 "Let me but tread that land before I die."

Had he not watched that host by night and day?
 Had he not turned from them God's wrath away?
 Had he not borne the burden of their sin?
 Yet for their sakes he may not enter in.

Perchance the punishment seemed not so hard
 While distance from the goal his footsteps barr'd;
 But now the land is near, and in his soul
 There swells a longing beyond all control

To tread its paths—might not God let this be?
 Might He not once reverse His own decree?—
 "Let me go over"—thus did Moses crave—
 "And see the good land beyond Jordan's wave."

“Let it suffice thee ; speak of this no more,”—
Such was the answer to that pleading sore—
“From Pisgah thou shalt see the land below,
But o’er this Jordan thou shalt never go.”

And he was silent—no rebellious word,
No murmuring thought the lofty spirit stirr’d—
Patiently left he Jordan’s banks behind,
Life’s hope and aim submissively resigned.

He is spared disenchantment—how his eye
Drinks in its loveliness before he die,
Gathers its beauty up in one long gaze,
Was it tear-dimm’d, or was it bright with praise ?

The distant vision of a long-loved face
While prison-bars keep from a close embrace ;
Eyes yearned for thro’ a life-time, seen at last
When sinking in the waves life’s need is past ;

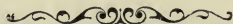
The soldier dying on the last red field,
That hath that very hour the victory sealed ;—
Were all these in his soul, as gazing on
He watched the shadows change on Lebanon ?

Yet in the kingly heart dwelt faith unquell'd,
His was the victory, tho' the crown withheld;
And soon beyond another deeper river
A better land shall be his own for ever.

Like him, how many a heart has prayed amiss—
“Deny all else, O Lord, but grant me this”—
And heard the knell-like answer passing o'er,
“Let it suffice thee, speak of this no more.”

But, unlike him, with bitter, murmuring cry
Refused to turn away the longing eye,
Refused each lesser boon it yet might win
Because *that* land might not be entered in.

Poor, struggling heart, there yet may be reserved
A better lot for thee, tho' undeserv'd,
Finding as Moses found on Pisgah's crest,
A goodlier land for evermore possess.



GARIBALDI.

APRIL 26TH, 1864. (Par, Cornwall).

AND we have really looked upon his face
Whose name for long hath held so large a place
In all our hearts—altho' we could not know
How large a place, till ebb'd the spring-tide flow
Of his success. Then to ourselves first shown
The harvest of our faith whose seeds were sown
So deep. And now what went we forth to see?
There was no crown, no visible royalty;
Nor, as—in Holy Wars—the Knight of old
Was the cross bound upon his mantle's fold.
Yet both were present—ay, a crown most fair
Such as anointed kings but seldom bear,
A cross unseen because to the true breast
So closely clasp'd—the cross of self repress;
Of life, and dearer things than life laid down—
More fit the martyr's than the soldier's crown
Indeed for him. The conqueror's is of earth
And earthy, perishable, little worth;
But self-denial, truth, and patient love
Need no translation for the speech above.

Their earthly crown not glorious to behold,
Tear-stained, thorn-lined, is yet refinèd gold.
Happy are they the willing brow who bare
Humbly and steadfastly that crown to wear,
Even though with stumbling the hard path be trod,
Surely such are remembered before God.



“YE HAVE DONE IT UNTO ME.”

AN INCIDENT IN JOHN FALK'S REFUGE AT WEIMAR.

(See extract from “*Praying and Working*,” in “*Sunday at Home*.”)

YOUNG lips have said their simple grace
 Ere they retire to rest—
 “Lord Jesus, bless what Thou hast given,
 And deign to be our Guest.”

But while the words all heedlessly
 Pass o'er the lips of some,
 One little voice is heard to ask,
 “Why does He never come?”

“Dear child, believe, and yet the Lord
 Shall surely meet thy sight.”
 “Then will I leave a place for Him,
 Lest He should come to-night.”

O, blessed Childhood, with thy faith
 A sea reflecting Heaven;
 The faith of after-life will be
 The same sea tempest-driven.

But hark ! a knock is at the door,
A homeless guest is there ;
Trembling and cold he seeks for aid—
And, lo ! the empty chair :

A place at table kept for him :—
“I see,” the young boy said,
“As Jesus could not come Himself
He sent the poor instead.”

Yea, little child, hold fast that faith,
Let all the poor that be,
In mind, or body, or estate,
Come in Christ's name to thee ;

The poor in earthly goods, the poor
In happiness and peace,
The poor in light, the poor in love, ' .
O, very poor are these.

We read of how the Son of Man
Went on His painful way,
And long that we had had the power .
To serve Him day by day.

We envy her who at the well
Drew water for her Lord,
When weary He sat thus to rest
Where the cool springs were stored.

How blest Zaccheus when the Christ
Came in to be his guest ;
More blessèd he who leant his head
Upon that Saviour's breast.

We envy her who brought her oil,
Anointing for the tomb—
Love's lavish gift that counts no cost,
That has for stint no room.

And hers, of weight and worth untold,
Whose tears in bitter flow,
Wherewith she bathed His weary feet,
Was all she could bestow.

O, to be as the little lad
Who own'd the fishes twain,
And five loaves of that wondrous feast,
Upon the grassy plain ;

Or the lone fishers on the shore
With whom He came to eat—
“*Children,*” the loving accents said,
And, “*Have ye any meat ?*”

We envy these—yet might we too
Have Him to be our Guest,
The water give, the bounteous feast,
The spikenard, and the rest.

We might, but will not—we deny
His words with reasoning dim,
That service done for human need,
Is service done for Him.

How can we wonder any more
At prophecy forgot,
That when He came unto His own,
His own received Him not ?

We are like them—the kingly robe
Its lustre must afford ;
Beneath the lowly garb and state
We cannot see the Lord.

And if He came to earth again,
Meek as in olden day,
How many who now name His Name
Would coldly turn away !

(Note A.)



WEST LAVINGTON, APRIL 6TH, 1865.

(RICHARD COBDEN'S FUNERAL DAY).

THERE, where his best hope long ago was laid,
 There, where his steps in life no tarrying made
 Because his sorrowing heart he could not trust
 So near its shattered idol in the dust ;
 There, in the sweet glow of the young spring-tide
 Lay him down gently by his dear child's side,
 Smooth his own English sod his head above
 Midst bitter tears of a strong-hearted love ;
 Nor grudge him what ye call too early rest,
 He has toiled hard, and he has "done his best."
 "A good day's work"—is not this lofty praise
 When many to themselves live all their days ?
 "A good day's work" for Country, God and Man—
 But yesterday each act of his to scan
 Men's eyes and ears were quick and overwise,
 Mistakes and errors keen to criticise ;
 For common minds have marvellous skill to find
 Weakness and failing in a higher mind—
 Its smallness (like their own) they can dissect,
 Its greatness quite unable to detect ;
 And so our nobler men go on their way
 To flippant tongues and pens a ready prey.

So was it yesterday—but not so now,
For Death's baptizing hand hath touch'd his brow,
And in that presence men grow calm and just,
Their better nature wakes with "*Dust to dust.*"
Thus with the crowd—while minds of higher tone
Who often failed with him to be at one,
Say sorrowfully—"Here a good man lies,
Here every shadow of dissension dies—
Like him we seek to walk where Duty leads,
And with our flowers, like his, are mingled weeds,
We could not know till he was summoned hence
How strong the bond, how slight the difference."

There, in his chosen place he rests in peace,
Tho' the day's work long ere the day's close cease.
What tho' old age he might not live to see,
Good deeds, not years, make worthy history;
And only Death, who robbed him, could restore
His "bright and beautiful" to his arms once more:
Little we know, but love that God has given
We feel must be enduring in His Heaven;
And he we mourn hath left all fear and doubt,
Entering that fold whence never more go out
They who have followed where the Shepherd led,
Tho' with a faltering and uneven tread—
The rocks, the swamps, the wilderness all past,
He hears the greeting—"Heaven is thine at last."

A few years hence, and many more must go,
“ Good men and true,” with him to slumber low ;
How many names it will be pain to miss
From daily records will be joined to his,
When they like him *a good day's work* have done,
Their weary hands the palm of victory won—
While those who stay shield not alone their dust,
But guard *the blessed Memory of the Just*.



COWPER'S LAST WORDS.

THE LAST WORDS OF COWPER WERE—"WHAT CAN
IT SIGNIFY?"

"No voice divine the storm allay'd,
No light propitious shone,
When snatch'd from all effectual aid
We perish'd, each alone;
But I beneath a rougher sea,
And 'whelmed in deeper gulfs than he."

Last verse of Cowper's "Castaway."

WHAT could it signify? one moment more
To grope in blindness on thy darkened way,
When Christ so soon thy vision should restore,
His healing hand upon thine eyes should lay—
So soon to hear Him say: "Receive thy Sight;"
So soon to be where there is no more night.

What could it signify? one moment more
The poor bark struggling with the wild waves'
will,

When Christ so soon above their deafening roar
Should speak the soft yet God-like words: "Be
still!"

And thou shouldst lift thy wondering eyes to see
That He—unknown—had ever sail'd with thee.

What could it signify? one moment more
The wrath and rushing of the storm to dare,
Before the Mansion's Lord unbar the door,
And bid thee come to rest and shelter there;
And thou shouldst find thyself no stranger guest,
But a child taken to his Father's breast.

What could it signify? one moment more
To dream a dream most terrible and wild,
That vexed the slumberer's soul with anguish sore,
When Christ so soon should on thy woe have
smiled,
Murmuring—as fell Dawn's soft and cheering gleam
Upon the troubled couch—'Tis but a dream.

If thou wert with us still, if yet the weight
Press'd upon heart and brain, we might not bear
To think of thee in such forlorn estate,
In the felt darkness of that black despair—
But what can signify the anguish past
Now that Joy's spring-tide floods thy soul at last?

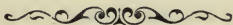
What can that perish'd suffering matter now?
Hath not God wiped away each bitter tear?
Thou grasp'st the truth thou hadst to die to know
That thy dim sight made not God's truth less
clear—

Where all were loved thou couldst not hated be,
And the blood shed for all was shed for thee.

A "voice divine" from Heaven "the storm
allayed,"

A "light propitious" on thy darkness "shone ;"
Thy Saviour brought to thee "effectual aid,"

And through His might thy victory was won—
Now dost thou breathe of purer climes the air,
The clouds are gone, the sun was always there.



BLAKE'S RETURN.

*Suggested by reading in the "Athenæum" some extracts
from Dixon's Life of Admiral Blake.*

" I FEEL that God has called me hence,
'Tis His decree—my work is done,
And my last battle hath been fought,
And my last victory hath been won.

" And I am willing to depart,
Glad to escape this toil and strife—
Knowing I leave no task undone
I would not ask, or wish for life ;

" I only pray that I may reach
My native land before I die,
To tread her storm-dash'd cliffs again,
And then beneath her turf to lie."

Blow, favouring breezes, gently blow,
And swiftly waft the hero home,
To see the land he loves once more,
Ere he again set forth to roam,

Upon a voyage new and strange,
Beyond the reach of wind or wave,
Where each must steer his bark alone,—
The dim, far voyage of the grave.

“ Say, are the rugged cliffs in sight ?
Tell me, my comrades, shall mine eye
Behold the shore it yearns to see
Again one moment ere I die ?

“ Say, are the golden cliffs in sight ? *
The sands of life are running low—
Oh, England, might I gain thy strand,
How gladly would I earth forego.”

Land ! land ! behold the rocky shore,
Behold, the bare, blue hills arise ;
Now, Hero, from thy dying couch
Lift up thy languid, longing eyes.

It is in vain—it is in vain—
His sight is waxing faint and dim ;
The bare, blue hills, the rocky shore
Are rising all in vain for him.

* Some of the rocks west of the Lizard Point are brilliant with yellow lichen.

His native land is very near,
Yet that fair land unseen must be ;
A "region very far away,"
Full soon his failing eyes shall see.

They throng the cliff, the beach they throng,
Their eager eyes o'erlook the sea,
They strive whose voice the first shall hail
Him who returns with victory.

Hush ! hush ! keep down the joyous shout,
Let it sink low in tears and dread—
Silence is meet for him—would ye
With mirth and cheer salute the dead !

The proud *St. George* floats o'er the wave,
But let no voice the stillness break—
She brings the Hero's pulseless form,
But not the heroic soul of Blake.

He died when his ship, the *St. George*, was entering
Plymouth Sound.



TO ANY HAPPY BABY.

How would it be to wish thee in thy rest,
 Shielded by babyhood from all alarms,
 No colder pillow than thy mother's breast,
 No harsher cradle than thy father's arms ?

How would it be to wish that thou might'st ne'er
 Tread the rough, uphill ways of mortal life ?
 Never be overweighted with its care ?
 Never be maimed and worsted in its strife ?

Never should know how dread its solitude,
 Nor feel in darkness for a guiding hand ?
 Never should watch the ever-broadening flood
 Wave upon wave encroaching on the land ?

How would it be to wish the smooth, white brow
 Be never traced with lines of weary thought ?
 That the soft cheek be not less soft than now ?
 That by the small hand be no labour wrought ?

How would it be to wish those lips of rose
 Be ne'er the outlet for a word amiss ?
 Remain as pure until their early close
 As when they felt the new-made parents' kiss ?

And they should moan—"Our nestling dove, whose
wing

Hath early dared so far and wide a flight ;
Our lamb, that in the flowery time of spring
Hath been safe folded long before the night :—

"Did we not love thee with a love unknown ?
Canst thou be dearer even in Heavenly bowers ?
Why have thy baby feet outstripp'd our own,
And sooner reach'd the Father—thine and ours ?"

So might they ask in bitterness—while we
Whose the child was not, murmur'd with low
breath,
That tho' their sorrow might most passionate be,
There was strange comfort in that early death.

That there were some inclined to covet much
The alabaster form's soon-granted rest,
Yearning indeed that they had been of such,
The Heavenly-favoured, and the earthly blest.

Would it be well, then, with beseeching word
To pray—"O God, each cradle-gift resume ;
People Thy heaven with infant angels, Lord ;
Brief be their quiet passage to the tomb :

“Thou know'st our sin-stain'd fingers soon will blur,
And blot the white page given to our control;
Thou know'st our sacrilegious hands will dare
Profane the Temple of the new-born soul :

“Take back in love the bright, untarnish'd gem,
Nor heed how wild the parents' wail may be ;
Thou know'st that Thou wilt keep it safe for them,
But that they will not keep it safe for Thee ” ?

Should we ask thus ? Surely it cannot be ;
If it were well, where then is human faith ?
There is a gift in God's vast treasury
More precious even than an infant death.

A faithful life—yea though an armèd host
Of doubts and fears assail the shuddering eye,
Not in “inglorious safety” is our boast,
Not with the *sheathed* sword doth the victory lie.



LINES.

SLEEP, youthful Hopes, sleep fast,
We have laid you down to rest
In the chamber of the Past,
Where comes no stranger guest.
With footsteps soft we tread
As we pass anear the door,
Lest the spell that Sleep has shed
Be a broken spell once more.

Sometimes we come and sit
By the cradle where ye lie—
Ay, we sit there rocking it
That your sleep grow sound thereby ;
But anon we start to mark
How light those slumbers be,
And we make the chamber dark,
Draw the curtains warily.

For when at times ye wake,
And will be lulled no more,
What havoc do ye make
With the calm that reigned before ?

If 'twere still and silent, yet
At least the calm was there ;
Now mingling voices fret
And around is strife and stir.

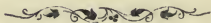
It is not as of old
When our hearts were all in tune
With those voices glad and bold,
Clear as a summer noon—
Now harshly do they jar,
Those notes cause discord deep,
Meant for joy their chantings are,
But they bid the listener weep.

Sleep, youthful Hopes, sleep fast,
Sleep, that we too may rest ;
In the chamber of the Past
Be your lids with slumber prest :
Strong pleasure could ye bring
When with you we had a part,
But 'tis vain your songs to sing
Unto the heavy heart.

Yet did we but behold
How God to us has given
Than our claims a thousand-fold
More on this side of Heaven—

We should not stand to weep
Where ye, youthful Hopes, repose,
But should smile above the sleep
That doth hours of gladness close.

Your laughter once enjoyed
In sooth we need not moan,—
Faith's voice would fill the void
With higher, holier tone—
Were that by us but heard
Our vain regrets would cease,
Ye, by sighing undisturb'd,
Would slumber on in peace.



THE UNTRIED VOYAGE.

“The river is rushing forward, the clouds are hurrying onward; the winds are sweeping past, because here is not their rest. Ask the river, ask the clouds, ask the winds, where they go to? Another land! Ask the great sun, as he descends away out of sight, where he goes to: Another land!”—*Mrs. Gatty's “Parables from Nature,” (The Unknown Land.)*

AN ill-found bark to steer
 Across an unknown sea,
 Unlearnèd whether far or near
 Her destined port may be—
 To seek a distant strand
 From whence no voice hath come,
 Leaving the long-known native land
 Where we have been at home.

Who but such change would fear?
 Who such a voyage would dare?
 Who leave the old familiar “here”
 For that mysterious “there”?
 How shall we speak a speech
 Which we have never learn'd?
 Who the strange customs teach
 Which we have not discerned?

What though the fierce winds roar'd
O'er billows ne'er at rest ;
O'er sharp rocks like a naked sword
Hid in the ocean's breast.
These do not grieve us so
When the ship quits the strand ;
But Where—we ask—where do they go ?
Where do the voyagers land ?

So in the days of eld
Was the most venturous helm
By a weird, mystic dread withheld
From ocean's shadowy realm—
The mirthful waves might all
Dance on with joyous tone,
Beyond, a darkness like a pall
Hung o'er the drear unknown.

And who that secret stern
Would ever dare to sound ?
Who strive the wondrous lore to learn
Hid in that gloom profound ?
The ages onward sped,
Great deeds by Fame were told,
But still that riddle was unread
That awed the men of old.

At last a true seer spake
Of lands far o'er the sea—
Then shouts of mocking laughter brake,
That asked how might this be?
But he with steadfast faith
Still look'd beyond the wave,
Piercing a mystery dark as death,
As silent as the grave.

And boldly he set sail,
Boldly his course he steer'd,
With trust that did not yield or quail
Although no land appear'd ;
O'er ocean's waste impell'd,
A shoreless, desert sea,
For still his spirit's eye beheld
The land where he would be.

At last the goal was gained—
A region heavenly fair
Received the seer whose faith unfeigned
Had led his footsteps there.
But when at home the same
Slight sail again was furl'd,
An old familiar tale became
That unknown shadowy world.

But what if passing hours
 Had brought oblivious spell?
If, tasting of the lotus flowers,
 They bade the past farewell?
And from that shore unseen
 Had found no homeward track?
Had that new world less real been
 Because they ne'er came back?



BETHANY.

Suggested by the remark of a Friend who had been in the Holy Land, that at Bethany the traveller might almost literally tread in the Saviour's steps, as time made scarcely any impression on the rocky path.

THE rugged path our Saviour trod,
Do we not long to tread to-day ?
We would not care, O Son of God,
How hard, how rough, how steep the way.

We would not heed the weary feet,
The aching limb unmark'd should be ;
We would not fear the burning heat,
Lord, if we were but following Thee.

But rougher than the rock-hewn road,
To our poor hearts the hallow'd way
Which leadeth straight to His abode
Whom we profess to seek to-day.

The path wherein we self deny,
Harder than that at Bethany,
Alone is pleasing in Thine eye—
Is that, O Lord, which leads to Thee.

From this we shrink, from this we turn
With tearful eye and shuddering brow ;
Not *this* the sacrifice we yearn
To offer our Redeemer now.

Yet that hard way hath trodden been
By younger, weaker feet than ours ;
Yea, infant footsteps have therein
Walked boldly where our spirit cowers.

And yet we shun the pathway still
Wherein our Saviour loved to tread ;
And rather seek with restless will
To choose our own hard paths instead.



SCATTERED AND GATHERED,

“ They grew in beauty side by side,
 They filled one home with glee.”

F. HEMANS.

“ I believe that bitterness and anguish of soul is not offensive, when not accompanied with repining at the will and pleasure of my gracious and compassionate Lord, who, when passing through the straits and difficulties of humanity, wept in love divine at the tomb of Lazarus. His compassions fail not ; neither is the greatness of His faithfulness to a poor frail mortal one particle diminished, who, in the depth of affliction and anguish, still endeavours to breathe, in humble resignation and sincerity, the language of ‘ Thy will be done.’ ”
 —*Extract from Daniel Wheeler's Journal.*

AN English Home—what thoughts of bliss
 In that dear word abide,
 With Earth's most sinless happiness
 How is its sound allied ;
 Of all her promised scenes of rest
 The happiest and the holiest.

The parents' love, the children's mirth,
Young voices' music sweet,
Young feet that gladly tread the earth,
And as the swift years fleet,
So manly strength and woman's grace
Deck that lithe form and this fair face.

Such was that home, that Christian home,
Where gathered round his knee
Sweet children in their ripening bloom,
And by his side was she
The crown of all, the crown of life,
The tender Mother, faithful Wife.

Was not his heart at times opprest
With fears of what might be ?
For barks that shared one haven's rest
Part far and wide at sea ;
And flowers that filled one garden bed
In distant scenes their leaves have shed.

Some strand must be the first to break
In every cable bound,
Some tree must be the first to shake
Its foliage to the ground ;—
So first the Mother's lonely grave
They made hard by the Neva's wave.

To stand that dying one beside
Not to his love was given :—
Soon will the children, too, divide,
Some for earth, some for heaven ;
While eyes with parting tears are dim
“ Some go to her, some stay with him.”

Meanwhile his way by day and night
Is o'er the Southern Sea,
To bear to other souls the light
That lit his own—to be
Where coral reef each isle enrings
A messenger of heavenly things.

Not of home's solace all bereft
While, ever by his side,
One cherish'd hand and voice are left
To share those wanderings wide,
To say the old, familiar name,
That Childhood's lips so early frame.

But sorrow followed in his wake,
And track'd him o'er the wave—
Beside the Neva's banks they make
Again an English grave—
Haste, Maiden, to thy Mother's breast,
What cold can chill that place of rest ?

Ere this, another tale of woe,
Is borne upon the breeze ;
And the heart sinketh very low
Amid those distant seas—
His first-born son (thus far 'twas blest)
'Neath English earth is laid to rest.

Summer and winter went and came
And still he journeyed on
Beneath the Southern Cross of flame,
While yet—" *Thy will be done* "
Was murmured by the patient heart
Shuddering beneath each fresh wound's smart.

Summer and winter came and went,
Nor yet his journeyings cease,
Till to the waiting soul was sent
"The order of release"—
And he may seek his native land,
His stripp'd and broken Household band.

* * * * *

The blue French skies are smiling o'er
An English dying bed ;
With weary spirit aching sore
Bends o'er it that grey head—
Yet tho' the child whom storms had spared
Is summoned from the path he shared,

Father, rejoice ! not Sin's strong hand
Doth lure him from thy side,
Only Death hath unloosed the band
That Life had fondly tied.
One word stills doubts and questionings dim,
One thought—the Lord hath need of him.

But with the sackcloth garb, alas,
Around the spirit cast,
The head anointed, washed the face,
Unseen of men to fast,
Across the sea he takes his way
His Master's message to convey.

Still freshly yearning for his dead
The path might well seem rough ;
But God is pitiful—He said,
Said soon—“*It is enough.*”
And where the New World rivers sweep
He gave to His beloved—Sleep.

The broad Atlantic rolleth wide
To part those kindred graves—
Mother and Daughter rest beside
The Neva's frozen waves,
And only alien footsteps tread
About their cold, snow-curtain'd bed.

The living English turf lies green
Over the Brothers' breast—
The lonely Father sleeps serene,
Apart from all the rest ;
But where no farewell tears may be
They meet—where there is no more sea.

One sky beneath they might not die,
Nor rest beneath one sod,
But safe their scatter'd ashes lie,
Safe in the hands of God—
Together bound those sheaves shall be,
And garnered for Eternity.



FRANKLIN'S FATE.

“ ———Franklin and his venturous fleet :—
 How haply at some glorious goal
 His anchor holds, his sail is furl'd,
 That Fame hath named him on her scroll
 Columbus of the Polar world.”

J. BUCHANAN READ.

(Written when Franklin's fate was unknown).

OFF the dark clouds of mystery roll
 That o'er his fate so long were hurl'd—
 We know that at a “glorious goal
 His anchor holds, his sail is furl'd.”

Not where cold, glittering fields of ice
 Instead of verdant meads are seen ;
 Not where the lofty snow-hills rise,
 But by the “fields of living green.”

Twelve long and weary years ago
 The toil-worn mariner was safe,
 Was gone where there is “no more snow,”
 Where no storms rage, no billows chafe.

Twelve years ago he ceased to heed
How wild the Polar winds might be ;
Twelve years ago he ceased to need
His Country's aid or sympathy.

Twelve winters all their snows have piled
O'er that grey head, and gallant breast ;
And twelve brief Arctic summers smiled
Above that lone but hallow'd rest.

Rejoice, because that fearless soul
Has found at last an unknown world—
Rejoice, that at a “ glorious goal
His anchor holds, his sail is furl'd.”



A REMINISCENCE.

(FRIENDS' MEETING, BIRMINGHAM, JULY 30, 1873.)

A STRANGER did I sit that day
 Unknowing that the rapid Tay
 Had swept a young life hence ;
 And that the murmuring of the stream
 Was mingling like a mournful dream
 With holy confidence,

For one whose ever-vacant seat
 Where he with them was wont to meet
 Oppress'd the worshippers,
 Pondering on God's mysterious way ;—
 But I, a stranger on that day
 Knew not their griefs and cares ;

Till a voice spake in accents clear
 Those words annihilating fear,
 Trampling it in the dust—
 “No evil shall come nigh to thee
 Because the Lord Most High shall be
 Thy everlasting trust.”

“Christ walks the waters still,” it said,
Therefore, sad hearts be comforted,
 Even though it be His will
Not to stretch forth His hand to save
The young and good from sudden grave—
 Christ walks the waters still.

“To such no evil shall befall—
But we, how shall we meet the call?
 With gladness or with fear?”
So words that warned and that consoled
The touching story did unfold
 Unto the stranger’s ear,

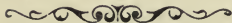
For whom there was no empty place,
No memory of the bright, young face
 Haunting so many there;
Yet by each solemn, trustful word,
The heart of sympathy was stirr’d
 With others’ thoughts to share.

No evil hath befallen him,
So let those trust whose eyes are dim:—
 Weep for the hearts grown cold,
For those lost ’neath the stifling tide
Of greed, which every year doth hide
 Wrecked lives of worth untold.

His is small loss and mighty gain—
No languor on the couch of pain,
 No rust upon the soul.
The race had only just begun,
A few straight steps and it is won,
 Lo, he hath reached the goal.

A crash, in which the casket fell,
The pearl it shrined invisible
 Was safe from every ill.
Be it to stop or stay the breath
Whether He save from life or death
 Christ walks the waters still.

(Note B.)



MARY MAGDALENE.

(Suggested by Macduff's "Memories of Gennesareth.")

BEHOLD ! unshrinkingly she stands
At that dread scene of loss ;
Endures to see those loving hands
" Nailed to the bitter Cross."

Endures to see the long, sharp thorn
That holy brow to touch,
Endures to see Him eyed with scorn,—
Because she loves so much.

Though each drop of that saving tide
Like ice falls on her soul,
Where weaker love its face would hide,
Her eyes will see the whole.

The Hebrews' awful curse she hears
Choosing their children's part ;
The Roman soldiers' long, bright spears,
Seem piercing to her heart.

And yet that pallid glance and brave
Ne'er falters from His brow ;
She, the weak woman, may not save,
But she will share his woe.

Whence came that strength ? the feet that
trod
The waves with Christ in sight,
That followed far the Son of God,
Reached not to Calvary's height.

O, Mary, Mary, standing there,
Didst thou not favour gain
For all who woman's name should bear
Amid earth's wrong and pain ?

And hadst thou not thy great reward ?
(What greater one could be ?)
The first words of thy Risen Lord,
Addressed, true heart, to thee.

"*Mary !*" What strain of eloquence
E'er thrill'd the human heart
As that one word thrilled every sense,
Bidding all fear depart ?

We know not if thy after-life
Showed bright or dark for thee ;
Whether it passed in peace or strife
Unknown to us must be.

But surely this undoubting faith
May in our hearts remain,
That Jesus in thy hour of death
Said—" *Mary* "—once again.



THE CAPTIVE SEA-GULL.

POOR Prisoner ! thou that hast been wont to be
 Free of two elements, the air and sea—
 Such glorious freedom—revelling in delight
 With stormy winds when they had reach'd their
 height,

Thy wild shriek rising with the tempest's breath,
 Bound to a doom worse, O far worse, than death.
 What is it to thee altho' the sun is high,
 Tho' mighty winds are rolling thro' the sky ?
 The smooth bright sands once printed by thy tread
 Thou hast exchanged for this damp garden-bed ;
 For the wild freedom of the cliff and moor,
 These scanty gravell'd walks thou must endure :
 And for the sea—all other perished bliss
 Is but as nothing when compared to this.
 Is hope quite dead ? or is it sometimes stirr'd,
 Some strange, strong instinct in thy heart, poor
 Bird,

When the storm drives thy joyous mates in-shore,
 Their wild cry mingling with the tempest's roar,
 Their clear, exultant cry ?—for tones may wake
 Memory when nought beside her sleep can break,

Remembered tones. Meanwhile how near to thee,
Almost in sight, rolls on thy native sea,
Yet at a hopeless distance—thou art here
“Dying of thirst with all the waters near.”

How like art thou to many a youthful soul
That looks to launch where floods of glory roll,
That spreads its wings across a sunlit sea
Whose stainless waves flow to Eternity—
Till beaten back to earth, and captive held
Those loftier instincts are for ever quell'd.
The drooping wings grow weaker evermore,
For wings are vain unless that thou wouldst soar.
Cumbered with dust, and heavier day and night,
Till they forget that wings were made for flight,
Save when some happier comrade long unseen
Remindeth that such blessed hours have been ;
And for a moment then the deadened ear
A faint, far echo of those waves can hear
Which might have floated onward to the land
Where the palm waits to fill the conquering hand ;
But hopeless now—in those o'erarching skies
The palsied wing can never hope to rise.

Alike indeed, and yet how most unlike—
Thou only lack'st the power thy bonds to strike,
While they have lost not more the power than will
To be what would that glorious dream fulfil.

THE VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE.

Partly suggested by a passage of Professor Maurice on the fallacy of supposing that it was easier to believe in Christ in the days of His earthly sojourn, than now.

If we could see Thee in the guise,
 The guise that once Thou worest,
 Beholding with our human eyes
 The human form Thou borest ;
 If only once our hands could touch
 The hands for us so stricken,
 Should we not learn to love Thee much ?
 Would not our cold zeal quicken ?

Thou didst Thy tenderness reveal
 By pitying human feeling,
 And with a word and look didst heal
 Those that had need of healing ;—
 Thou stood'st beside the bier and bed
 Where broken hearts were grieving,
 And at Thy call the quiet dead
 Became the restless living.

We were not there—we never saw
The sick man leave his pillow,
Nor heard the sea confess Thy law
And smooth its raging billow ;
We joined not those who sat amaz'd
With Lazarus at the table,
To see that Thou the dead hadst rais'd
Could be no cunning fable.

But at the Cross, O, where were they
Who sought Thy words like manna ?
Where those with palms who straw'd Thy
way,
And shouted forth—Hosanna ?
The thousands fed by hand of Thine
Where the green grass was growing ?
The wedding guests who drank red wine
From water-vessels flowing ?

I think the nobleman was there
Whose only son was yielded
By Death when wailed the Father's prayer
To Him its Keys who wielded :—
I think that Jairus must have come,
And surely yet another
Would not have lingered in her home—
The little damsel's Mother.

I think there was a nameless band
Who panted to surround Him,
Who yearn'd to pluck from foot and hand
The cruel nails that bound Him,
Who longed to lift the blood-stain'd crown
From off the brow it wreathèd,
Whose hearts scarce kept their anguish down
When His last prayer was breathèd.

Perhaps when it was all too late
Their fainting courage rallied,
And burning glow on faces sate
That erst with dread were pallid—
The wealth they feared to lose was dross ;
Who shrank from spear and bow-man ?
They would have borne Him from the Cross
In spite of Jew and Roman.

But all was over—Death had won
Its doubted victory o'er Him,—
And from their hearts all hope was gone
As to the grave they bore Him.
But was not this grief's bitterest part
That if they ne'er denied Him,
Yet that they had not had the heart
To stay and die beside Him ?

Did they not envy him who heard
The charge—"Behold thy Mother?"
The loved disciple, by that word
Claimed as the Master's brother?
That unto women, not to them,
Those words, of love the token—
"Ye Daughters of Jerusalem,
Weep not for Me"—were spoken?

Would not some wander east and west
Once to behold Him only?
And from henceforth forswear all rest,
Content to labour lonely,
Patient the many thorns to meet
That had the way directed,
If only so to reach His feet
In the Belov'd accepted?

Would it be thus? 'Tis hard to tell,
They saw Him yet believ'd not,
And with his own He came to dwell
But Him His own receiv'd not—
Dare we to say our hearts had been
With stronger faith impressèd?
They who believed but have not seen
His own word saith, are blessèd.

A DESERTED HOUSE.

“Christ will come to thee and bless thee with the splendour of His presence, if thou preparest within thee an abode fit to receive Him : all His glory and beauty are manifested within, and there He delights to dwell.”—*Thomas à Kempis.*

I HAVE no guest-chamber to offer, Lord,
 No furnished upper room to bid Thee to ;
 The dwelling that I have might be abhorred
 If other eye its wretchedness should view.

I would not scorn the building—it is Thine,
 Thou mad'st it for Thyself, and mad'st it fair ;
 But ravenous beasts, thro' carelessness of mine
 Have seized and used it for their unclean lair.

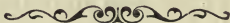
The walls, that glorious pictures should adorn,
 Are well-nigh hid with worthless imagery ;
 The snowy, silken curtains droop forlorn—
 Alas, that soiled and tattered they should be.

And overlaid with rubbish and with dust
 Is the white beauty of its marble floor :
 Yea, it might fill a stranger with disgust,
 For miry feet have trod it o'er and o'er.

The windows, that Thou mad'st like diamonds pure,
So to admit unchanged the spotless light,
Alas ! are dim, and clouded, and obscure—
'Tis hard sometimes to know the day from night.

I have no guest-chamber to offer, Lord,
No furnished upper room to bid Thee to,
Unless Thou wilt Thyself the power afford
To sweep its floor, and deck its walls anew.

Earth's meanest hovel would with glory shine
If Thou wert there—would be with splendour
gilt ;
Filled with Thy Presence it would grow divine,
Then how much more this house which Thou
hast built ?



LINES

On a picture in the Royal Academy (1862) illustrating the 15th of Luke, in which the Prodigal Son is represented as described below.

Ay, poor tired wanderer, thou mayst safely rest
 (Oh, safe indeed !) upon thy Father's breast,
 There mayst thou hide thy weight of guilt and
 shame,
 Undying love will never breathe their name.
 No harsh reproach thy late return shall greet,
 But servants haste to wash the poor torn feet
 That yesterday o'er stony paths went bare—
 And the best robe, instead of rags, to wear ;
 For thee who hungered for what swine might leave,
 While this great love was yearning to receive,
 And place with honour at the sumptuous board,
 To home and its discarded joys restored.
 Like thee, lost, erring prodigals are we ;
 Alike in sin, do we return like thee?
 Wasting our substance, wandering very far
 In a strange land where thousand perils are ;
 On joys forbidden do we feed with pride,
 Until at last, the very husks denied,

We call to mind the bounteous feast for all,
For guest and menial in the Father's hall—
Like thee, worn, famished, sorely press'd are we ;
How is it all do not return like thee ?



WILLIAM FORSTER.

“CALLED TO BE SAINTS.”

CALLED to be saints—how few the call obey,
 And follow Jesus fully in the way,
 Without or halting step, or anxious eye
 Cast wishful back where towers of Sodom lie !
 But thou, from very youth, that call didst heed,
 Took God's whole armour to thee for thy need ;
 And thenceforth meekly went o'er land and sea,
 Where'er thou heardest the whisper—Follow Me.
 Yea, tho' with tears thine eyes were often dim
 Thou didst rise up, leave all, and follow Him.
 His best beloved are privileged below
 Sometimes to taste the cup He drained—of woe ;
 He bore the burden of the whole world's pain,
 And they a portion of the weight sustain ;
 Even as He bow'd His head 'neath Jordan's stream,
 The same cold waters on their foreheads gleam,
 Weeping for those who for themselves weep not,
 Bearing the anguish of another's lot,
 Yet knowing, as the selfish never know,
 Rivers of blessing thro' their desert flow.

And if to thee God did less joy allow
Than often crowns His saints—what matter now ?
If He who fashioned that fine heart and mind
Saw best to put Fear foremost, Hope behind ?
What tho' in a far country thou must die
Without or wife or child thy pillow nigh ?
The pilgrim who 'mid strangers falls asleep
For lack of sweet home farewells doth not weep,
If that he knows the morning fair and bright
Shall give his lost ones back with fresh delight.
No drear last words are theirs who look to meet
Where are no partings, at that Saviour's feet
Who called Himself a *Brother*—all supplied,
Who did what they could not—who crossed the tide
Of the dark river with thee, did upbear
Above its swell, and find sure footing there.
The wedding garment then, and victor's crown,
And at the Great King's feast thou wert set down.
Was there a "lowest place" reserved for thee ?
Or rather, "Come up higher," would it be ?
And then—" *And thou shalt walk with Me in white
For thou art worthy*"—there is no more night.
But if we praise, 'twould seem as if thy face
Might look rebuke e'en from that dwelling-place.
What wouldst thou have us say? Safe, safe in
Heaven !
With the great multitude that are forgiven,

Thy robes washed spotless in the precious flood
That makes the vilest pure—a Saviour's blood;
Nothing thine own, all of His wondrous grace
That thou at last dost see Him face to face;
All of His mercy that thou hear'st the word:
Enter the joy—Belovèd—of thy Lord.



THE NEW YEAR (1871).

(FRANCO-GERMAN WAR.)

THAT "the Lord reigneth let the earth rejoice,"

Sang one in days gone by :

Is the Lord reigning ? pleads Earth's mournful voice,

Draws no redemption nigh ?

Say, hath God dropp'd the sceptre from His hand ?

While, like a raging flood

Let loose from lowest depths, from land to land

Rolls on the tide of blood ?

Is the Lord reigning ? Clouds and darkness lie

Girding about His throne ;

We cannot pierce them with our feeble eye,

Doth He still sit thereon ?

Hades and Death their prison doors have burst :

Doth He still hold the keys ?

And can He hush the tumult, so accurst,

As once the raging seas ?

Help us to trust there is no empty throne,

O Lord, set up above ;

Still to believe that Thou art God alone,

And still a God of love :

The freezing horrors of this new-born year

O, let them not benumb

The fainting faith which trusts Thou yet wilt hear

The prayer, "Thy kingdom come."



THE PELICAN.

THERE was a bird of yore,
 'TWAS said, with blood from her own wounded breast
 Would feed the unfledged nurslings of her nest,
 Such was the love that to her young she bore.

A fable? even so,
 But a deep truth lies in that tale of eld,
 Figuring the souls whose sympathies unquell'd
 Like the warm life-blood from their bosoms flow.

For others they grow pale,
 The bloom of youth fades from the cheek away,
 The brow grows furrowed, and the locks grow grey;
 For others' sake their eyes with longing fail.

Ay, souls that yearn to take
 Each crumb of comfort dropp'd on their own board,
 (Tho' God alone may know how small the hoard)
 To give to those for whom their heart-strings ache,

While its own loss and gain
 Fills many a human spirit day by day,
 These with their trembling lips are fain to pray:
 "Less joy, more care, more weariness, more pain,

“ So that I may a weight
From others lift, my good to them be given.”
Souls that would almost yield their hope of Heaven
To give to others passport thro’ its gate.

Painful their path each day,
Yet hallow’d by His steps who once hath past
Over that road—Who trod it to the last,
As none beside can ever tread that way.

But earthly powers are bound—
None may his brother from his cross redeem,
Nor from his own field turn the enriching stream
To fertilise another’s barren ground.

And God His care hath proved,
In this decree, or else is many a one
Would stand, long ere the day of life was done,
Naked of joy to clothe whom so they loved.



LIVINGSTONE'S FUNERAL.

OUR words above the blessèd dead proclaiming
 That all is well—
 Too often dark funereal pomps are shaming
 The truths we tell.

And even while exultant strains are ringing
 Of life and light,
 We group around dark symbols, visions bringing
 Of death and night.

But yew nor cypress o'er thy bier was throwing
 Its doleful shade—
 There the triumphant palm, its splendour showing
 A glory made.

And flowers of hope, and pleasant sunlight shining
 The grave above
 Spoke not of dreariness, failure and repining,
 But warmth and love.

For thee meet emblems, now all travel closing,
 And death all past,
 A weary conqueror on his couch reposing,
 And crown'd at last.

The changeless, fadeless crown of life eternal,
The faithful dead
By Him—whose words, tho' kingly, are fraternal—
Are promisèd.

Not with defeat, but victory in his right hand,
Death came to thee ;
Thine, the cold fingers of the angel's white hand
Clasp'd tenderly.

From that which we had given thee far other
Thy last hours were ;
Yet He who cleaveth closer than a brother
Was surely there.

Thou in His everlasting arms wast lying
Who once hath died ;
Oh, can the loneliest death-bed of the dying
Need aught beside ?

While thy worn relics in the Minster's glory
Their rest have won,
No boundless wastes around, no strange skies o'er
thee,
Thy journeyings done—

Thou goest forth, sheaf-laden, 'neath Christ's banner,
From Afric's shore,
Casting thy palm-branch, Love's deeds thy hosanna,
His feet before.

PILATE'S WIFE.

HAD she, that high-born lady, heard,—
Daughter of queenly Rome,—
Tidings of Christ her soul that stirr'd
Within her noble home ?

Not where the dazzling lights were seen,
And rich, bright wine was pour'd,
Where proud guests jeered the Nazarene
At Pilate's festive board.

Not there indeed—her maids at least
Might wondrous tales declare,
The while they robed her for the feast,
Or decked with pearls her hair,—

How womanhood, all soiled and dim
Crept trembling to His feet,
Spurned by the sinful, found with Him,
The Sinless, welcome sweet ;

How when the father bade Him feel
For his afflicted son,
He listened to the fond appeal,
“ *He is mine only one ;*”—

How Jairus' little daughter, He
Did from Death's sleep awake ;
How, for the widow, tenderly
The same strong bands He brake ;

And how (for love all fear disarms) .
Young children heard His call,
And how He took them in His arms,
And how He blessed them all ;

And how His tears fell free and fast
A mortal's grave beside,
Before the words His lips had past,
That grave which opened wide ;

And how He bade the burdened come,
Heart-broken and opprest,
And to the homeless offered home,
And to the weary rest.—

And had some baby face, of yore
She watched in slumber deep,
Lifted sad, dying eyes once more,
Long closed in endless sleep?

And while she sighed—"Had He been here
My darling had not died,"
Grew love to Him that boon so dear
Who would not have denied?

Perhaps she shrank from Pilate's sneer,
Or wrathful bitter word,
If she, his Roman wife, should dare
To call this alien—Lord.

But when she knew His foes had wound
Around Him fatal bands,
And ready for the Cross were bound
Those tender, healing hands,—

Did helpless sorrow fill her heart?
What could she do but weep?
And weary with the mourner's part,
A refuge seek in sleep?

Sleep drops o'er outward life a veil,
But sometimes that doth raise
Which hides from waking vision pale,
Untried mysterious ways.

And wandering 'mid its shadows dim
Something, we know, she saw
Of woe and dread concerning Him,
That filled her soul with awe.

Stable and strong the Cross doth stand
That sacred form doth bear,
And Pilate with unwilling hand
Hath writ His title there.

'Tis over now—earth's shame complete,
The Cross is bare and lone,
Curses and scorn no longer greet
“Messiah's earthly throne.”

And did they tell her all the tale?
What crown they made Him wear?
The unslaked thirst, the dying wail,
The last forgiving prayer?—

Of the rent veil, the darkened sky,
The riven burial sod,
That forced from Roman lips the cry
“ *This was the Son of God* ” ?—

No record tells—but many things
She suffered for His sake,
And heavenly Mercy's shadowing wings
A sure, safe refuge make.

And they who through the midnight gloom
Struggle to twilight grey,
May find the deepest, darkest tomb
A New and Living Way.

(Note D.



CALLED HIGHER.

WE would not mourn for one most dear
 If, summoned from our low estate,
 In regal halls with prince or peer
 In fit equality to mate ;
 If we could of his welfare know
 Through pleasant words his hands should trace,
 Though tears for conscious loss might flow,
 And we might hunger for his face,

Yet should we smile amid our tears,
 And say that we were well content
 Lonely to pass the rapid years,
 Which he in joy and honour spent.—
 “Yea,” we would answer, “far too well
 We love him to desire that he
 Return—where happiest he may dwell
 We wish him there, where’er it be.”

Then wherefore is our mourning sore
 For those called higher by our King ?
 Is it not for that nevermore
 Time will a message from them bring ?

“One word,” we say, “from thy dear voice
In its old tones would still my pain,
Speak but *thyself*, I will rejoice,
And henceforth never weep again.”

But if no message e'er may bring
Tidings of those there gone to dwell,
Although the Palace of a King,
It is the Father's House as well.
Not to the mightiest Monarch's land
Are those belovèd ones exiled—
What shieldeth like a Father's hand?
Who like a Father loves the child?



THE LOST ANGEL.

SHE sat and watched the cold, grey sea
 That murmured heavily and low,
 When faded from it hastily
 The brightness of the sunset glow.
 How changed from what that sea had been
 When summer noon above it shone,
 When sapphires blue, and emeralds green,
 And diamonds it put laughing on ;
 Or when a flush of light there lay
 As, folding up with gesture high
 Her solemn, gorgeous robes, the day
 In glory had lain down to die.—
 And then she thought the cheerless sea
 Was like her heart—that was the same
 That once had beat so joyously,
 But now how slow its pulses came—
 The present care, the vanished bliss,
 And then her thoughts took shape like this :—

'Tis said our blind eyes never know
 When Angels dwell with us
 Till it is time for them to go,
 And white wings waving to and fro

Betray the truth—and thus
I now by Memory's lamp can see
An Angel that once walked with me.

For at each mortal Baby's birth
There comes a Spirit fair
To stay for a brief time on earth,
To fill its heart with innocent mirth,
And ward off gloomy Care,
Lifting the tender feet aside
From stones no human eye descried.

Yea, for each happy little child
A new creation breaks,
And a new heaven and earth have smiled
For infant eyes yet unbeguiled
By sin, and all it makes
Of dimness, and unblinded by
The salt tears of maturity.

As in a dream one weeps to see
Towards a precipice
A little babe run fearlessly,
With merriment and songs of glee,
On, on to the abyss,
Yet with no power its life to save
By arm or voice from yawning grave—

Even so, Child-Angels must, I think,
Behold their charges go
With laughter to the very brink
Of that deep sea where some may sink,
And some just struggle through;
Launching their barks with Hope to steer,
Unmindful of the breakers near.

Sweet Angel, when I now re-tread
Bright paths once trod with thee,
A glory over them is shed,
By others' vision all unread
From thy dear memory,
Fair gleams of beauty lingering yet
Although the sun hath long been set.

But soon thou ceased with me to bide;
We parted, thou and I;
Thou hadst no power to stay the tide
That swept me wondering from thy side;
And had I raised a cry,
'Twere vain as clasp'd hands raised would be
When onward sweeps the surging sea.

With joy I saw thee disappear,
(O, let mine ignorance plead,)
'Twas with a smile and not a tear,
With bounding heart that felt no fear,

I watched thy form recede—
A rainbow spanned the horizon's bound,
And all was beautiful around.

And there were hopes whose radiant store
Made all the future bright,
Piercing the mists that hung before,
(Assured they hid a glorious shore)
Now some are perish'd quite,
And if some won their crown to-day
'Twould show like flowers on locks of grey.

To stand among the good and true,
Among the crown'd and blest,
The happier and the holier few—
Such was the dream my spirit knew,
Of joy and light possest :
But now no high and honour'd name,
No palm or crown I dare to claim.

O, if we might again begin,
Wash out the blotted page,
Efface its misery and sin,
And many a dreary line therein,
And every nerve engage
To make a better record there,
And write a tale more pure and fair !

Alas ! nor saint nor sage hath might
To mend or mar the Past—
There does it stand in shade or light,
The dark is dark, the bright is bright,
The die forever cast—
Woe's me, forgetting in that day
Present must turn to Past away.

O, my lost Angel, up and down
I seek for thee in vain—
In meadows green, where forests frown,
By lone sea-shore, in peopled town
I find thee not again—
O, dost thou keep my vacant place
Where such behold the Father's face ?

Poor, grieving heart, fresh comfort take,
Nor so the guardian lost deplore ;
One will not leave thee, nor forsake
Who is alive for evermore.
From childhood's sweet, half-conscious dreams
Stern must the waking ever be ;
But that which is from that which seems
Else never were made plain to thee.
Though in the Past thou weep'st to find
What well may shame thy spirit sore,

Yet look not on the things behind,
But press towards the things before.
The burden that thou canst not bear
Stoop at the Master's feet to lay,
Then from His hand take humbly there
The cross He proffers thee to-day.



PETER.

WE know that he denied—for every age
That story stands on the recording page,
Warning to all who in the fight engage

With unproved armour—trusting it alone,
Boasting of that which they believe their own,
As putting on and putting off were one.

We know that he wept bitterly, but know
Naught of the depths of his unspoken woe ;
What line could sound that anguish, being so

That he who *loved* denied—as madmen aim
Blows at the dearest breast—but when he came
Unto himself, O, what remorseful shame'

Must have wrung that strong heart ; what yearning
deep

Now to go forth watch by the Cross to keep,
And to confess that name with ready lip.

But all in vain—the last farewell is said
In that reproachful look of love instead
Of words—all over, and the Master *dead*.

So was it through the hopeless Sabbath-day,
With the tomb's sealèd stone unrolled away,
But hope dawned with the third day's dawning
grey.

"Tell the disciples"—thus the angels frame
Their words—"and *Peter*," not a sound of blame,
One name alone and that is Peter's name.

Courage, strong heart—Christ's pardoning love
shall give

A harder task than death—thou shalt receive
Grace thro' sore burdened years for Him to live.

Henceforth thou shalt indeed be as the rock
Thy Master hath foretold—the tempest-shock
Of earth and hell, thy steadfastness shall mock.

O, changeless Saviour, in that coming day
When to Thy white-robed saints in fair array
Those blessed words of welcome Thou shalt say :

"Ye good and faithful servants, enter now
The joy of your Lord,"—then bend Thy brow
On me with pitying love, adding—"and *thou*."



THE GIFT OF LIFE.

“He made thee, when He might have made
A soul that would have loved Him more.”

Faber.

O, THOU that faintest in the heat of noon,
Whose sword is dropping from thy slackened hand,
Half weary of a harp thou canst not tune,
And of a life thou canst not understand ;

Ready to fold thy hands in dumb despair,
While the dropp'd oars go floating on the tide,
And the boat, aimless, drifteth anywhere,
So that thou cease its wavering course to guide ;

Saying, “ Why should I strive my bark to steer ?
Why face the adverse current any more ?
Why not go with the tide like others here,
And let chance pilot me to any shore ? ”

Be not dismayed ; take up thy sword again,]
And let thy fingers touch the harp once more—
God made it perfect, and perhaps a strain
Of music from those dissonant strings may pour.

Resume thy oar, and row against the gale;
What tho' the crested waves that rise before
Shall make thy heart beat fast, thy spirit quail—
Beyond them lies the ever-peaceful shore!

Remember when thou mourn'st in querulous tone,
That thou *art* is a boon from Heaven's great King;
Life's possibilities are all thine own,
And men have made of these a glorious thing.

Blaspheme not God by saying gifts from Him
Are than the gifts of earthly father worse—
Tis man for Ebal leaves Mount Gerizim,
'Tis man that turns the blessing to a curse!



THE GERMAN EMIGRANT.

“ . . . Strange and very pathetic cases are occurring at the diggings every day. . . He spoke particularly of a German who was evidently reduced to great distress. . . . He was too far gone to give any information regarding his friends, or the place whence he came. But it was clear that he had left a family somewhere, for he continually repeated to himself, ‘*Meine arme Frau! Meine arme Kinder!*’ ”—*Howitt's "Australia."*

IN Australian forest,—

Faint and sad, and wan,
Where the gold is gathered,—
Lies a dying man;
Yet the pale lips murmur,
While Death chills the brow,
“*Meine arme Kinder!*
Meine arme Frau!”

“*Meine arme Kinder!*
Meine arme Frau!”

Rise the alien accents
’Neath the forest bough—
Home and all its blessings
He has vainly sold;
For a grave he findeth
Where he looked for gold.

Haply there is standing
 'Neath the linden shade,
By the Rhine's bright waters
 Home his love hath made.
Can he see his cottage
 As it was of yore ?
See his fair-haired children
 Playing round the door ?

Can he see their mother
 With her patient brow ?—
His sick heart is yearning
 To embrace them now,
Pining for the pressure
 Of some cherished hand,
Longing for the language
 Of his Fatherland.

Forests of Australia,
 Signs of glittering gold,
These, though all around him,
 He does not behold ;
Still the pale lips murmur
 While Death chills the brow :
“ *Meine arme Kinder !*
 Meine arme Frau ! ”

Orphan children knowing
Not their lonely fate,
Widow'd wife not dreaming
She is desolate—
Quick step on the threshold
Oft will make her start,
Sudden call at evening
Thrill her to the heart.

Till that heart grows weary
Waiting, watching still,
And above the spirit
Broods a sense of ill—
Yet will love endeavour
Doubtings to dispel,
Still her lips be saying
“All will yet be well.”

She will tell her children
Morning, night, and noon,
But with strange misgiving,
“He is coming soon”—
Till hope's lights burn dimly
And go out at last,
Silence only hinting
That his life is past.

English words are whispered
In that dying ear,
Kind and pitying accents,
But he cannot hear—
Wife and Children's voices
Rise the stranger's o'er,
They alone are standing
His dim eyes before.

“ *Meine arme Kinder !*

Meine arme Frau ! ”

Still the pale lips murmur
While death chills the brow—
None the weight of sorrow
From his heart may move,
He is sorely burdened
With his earthly love.

He is drawing nearer,
Nearer to the goal
Where the body severs
Union with the soul—

“ *Meine arme Kinder !*

Meine arme Frau ! ”

Death that wail of anguish
Stills forever now.



THE LOST ATLANTIS.

“There is a legend that it (Atlantis) may ever and anon be seen from the coast of Galway, shining dimly in the light of the setting sun, though never to be trod by mortal footstep more.”

At eve, when the sun is setting
Off Erin's storm-beat shore,
And the weary day forgetting
Its toils so nearly o'er,
They tell us in ancient story
A vision there may be
Of the long-lost land of glory
Across the western sea.

With ever-varying splendour
The shifting clouds unfold—
Now gorgeous and then tender,
Now purple and then gold ;
Now hues no earthly fingers
E'er traced to charm the eye,
Then pale the soft light lingers
Upon the darkening sky.

A wondrous, mystic blending
Of the sun's fervid light
With liquid moonlight, lending
Charms both of day and night—
Pale twilight, rosy dawning,
Rising and setting sun,
Glories of noon and morning
All melted into one.

Sands that are more than golden
Shine thro' that radiant veil,
But the seeker's step is holden
And to reach it still will fail ;
Yet when the sun is setting
Off Erin's surf-drenched shore,
Which sun-dyed waves are fretting,
We glimpse that land once more.

A brief and strange revealing
To the dazed beholder's ken,
Like heavenly music stealing
Thro' the common haunts of men—
Would not his eyes part never
With a far-off, wondering gaze,
While he turn'd to the West for ever
At the gleam of sunset rays ?

O, where is the new world-finder
Who to seek that land will go,
And strive by some spell to bind her
To toil-worn lands below?
Alas, on that track of glory
From boyhood he might steer
Till his locks with age were hoary,
But that shore would never near.

Yea, e'en as the great Law-giver
Look'd on a goodly land,
On the further side the river,
Where he must never stand—
Even so at the golden portal
Of the lost Atlantis fair
We may watch, but in vain shall mortal
Ask for an entrance there.

O vanish'd and mourn'd Atlantis
The legend doth well portray,
How mighty that ceaseless want is
Which words can but ill convey:
But a sword that is each way turning
Still guardeth the Promised Land,
Where youth in its restless yearning
Believes it shall one day stand.

Yet a land that is far diviner
Is offered us even here,
(That should silence each sad repiner)
Not distant, but ever near—
Not seen off the coast of Galway
As clouds of glory part,
But a land that is open alway,
And free to the Pure in Heart.



“ HIS TENDER MERCIES ARE OVER ALL
HIS WORKS.”

YEA, over all—then there is none shut out ;
But as the mountains standing round about
Thy chosen city—so Thy fostering care
Is here, and there, O Lord, and everywhere.
Thy tender mercies, not to man alone,
But to each living thing for ever shown ;
The bird and beast, of which he sayeth *mine*,
Hast Thou not said, O Lord, they all are Thine,
Though scattered on a thousand hills ? their cry
For food Thou hearest from Thy throne on high ;
Thou hearkenest—for to Thee they are not dumb—
To their appeal which night and day doth come
Into Thine ears, against man’s cruel wrong
Trampling the weak because he is the strong.

And not with man but God their reckoning lies,
In pride or ignorance who dare despise
These weaker ones, and impiously invade
His rights who called all “good” that He had made :
And Who can for so stern a reckoning call
As He whose tender mercies cover all !



PERPETUA CONSTANTIA.

GIVE up, give up!—do not strive to climb
The rocky heights of a life sublime ;
The path to its citadel is steep,
And the moat at its foot is broad and deep—
Pass round Nepenthe's soothing cup,
Pledge life as it is—Give up, give up.

Hold on, hold on to thy lofty aim,
To the noble life that thou yearn'st to claim ;
Better to fall on the battle-field
Than to live with the brand of the coward seal'd,
Better the wounds of a righteous fight,
Than the unscarr'd front of a dastard flight.

Give up, give up!—thou wilt only be
Like thousands before and after thee,
Who joyed in the tourney's silken strife,
But shrank from the cold, sharp steel of life :
And the sun each time that the day revolves
Looks down on the grave of high resolves.

Hold on ! hold on ! O, would'st thou be
Like the craven crowd which surroundeth thee ?
Like men whose eye to the earth is bent,
On selfish hopes and aims intent,
Men who at Mammon's shrine bow down,
Who bear no cross, and who seek no crown ?

Give up !—the glow of the sunrise ray
Thou hast seen “ fade out into common day,”
Thy feet once eager the race to run
Lag wearily long ere the course is won,—
Be as others are—lay thy dreams aside,
Take gold or pleasure to be thy bride.

Give up, give up !—thou art false and frail,
And fickle—how canst thou then prevail ?
False to thy conscience, and weak of will,
And evil is rooted within thee still—
Truth's sword for a cleaner hand doth wait,
Thy touch would its purity desecrate.

Hold on, hold on—it is true, how true !
Thou art false, and feeble, and fickle too—
But art thou content to be fallen now,
Having once forgotten thy knightly vow ?
Is it that thou art down ? Then thy next step lies
Plainly before thee—Arise, arise !

The Shepherd-King, beloved of God,
When he fell on the path that he long had trod,
When bowed in the dust was the stately head,
For purple the penitent's garb instead,
Then the answer came to his bitter cry,
"I have put thy sin from thee—thou shalt not die."

Then he arose with his royal grace
Again to strive in the glorious race—
(In his deathless love for his rebel son
To learn the wrong that himself had done
To a higher Father's holier claim—)
In thy shame and thy grief do thou the same.

Hold on—as the drowning mariner
Cleaves close to the bent and quivering spar—
That clasp is all that withholdeth thee
From the depths of that never-satiate sea
That engulfs men's souls—though Hope be gone,
Yet, for dear life's sake—Hold on, hold on!



THE BEREAVED MOTHER.

I sit as fades the short day's light
 My lonely hearth beside ;
 O, once, upon this very night
 I stood there first—a bride :
 Now on the walls the flames but trace
 The outlines of one weary face,
 Where his, my love, my pride,
 Close to mine own in brightness shone ;—
 And our joys grew as time went on.

What boots it of a rapture dead
 To raise the shadowy ghost ?
 Our Baby—in that word is said
 Of joys a countless host,
 Like the first parents when they bent
 To the first infant arms, content
 That Paradise was lost—
 So near to Eden's bliss allied,
 And a new blessing born beside.

The years flew fast—our home was bright
With love, and peace, and joy,
O, vanished days of pure delight:—
There grew our noble boy;
Three little daughters at my knee
Made every hour pass cheerily
In mother's sweet employ,—
My gentle Agnes, pale, proud Clare,
And Amy—O, my Amy fair.

At last there rose a little cloud,
Small as a hand—but lo,
Soon o'er our heads in anguish bow'd
Did raging tempest blow;
We knelt beside our first-born dead—
Needs any more than this be said?
He knows and counts that woe
Who like a father pitieth,
Like mother who remembereth.

But as the rushing storm passed by,
A still, small voice was heard,
That seemed to whisper, "*It is I*"—
And we believed the word;
A void was made no time could fill
In both our hearts—but 'twas God's will,
Though in my husband's eye

I read how of life's hopes were none
Unblanched to him who owned no son.

Yea, we walked softly, never more
 To feel assurèd trust
In any treasure held in store
 Where cometh earthly rust—
And yet was e'en this utter woe
For me but as the first wild flow
 Of waters whose fierce lust,
Though with their prey awhile they play,
Will sweep the homestead all away.

God writ me desolate—He took
 The crown from off my brow ;
The darkest page in Sorrow's book
 He spread before me now,
For I was widow'd—lives entwined
Were sunder'd—I was left behind ;
 O, heaviest, bitterest woe—
One evermore in mind and heart,
And yet the bond was wrenched apart.

I spake, and said that I did well
 To weep from morn to night,
Never the storm of woe to quell—
 When in clear tones and light,

A voice said in my calmer hours—
Take up again thy scattered flowers
That thou neglectest quite ;
Although uprent thy forest tree,
Scorn not what God still leaves to thee.

I started—what if he should take
Me at my bitter word ?
That all was worthless for one's sake,
So I His wrath had dared—
Not wholly lorn, nor quite bereft
While children three to me were left,
In love and mercy spared.
I thought not then that any hand
But God's would break that girlish band.

How shall I tell it ? from the shade
Of that great household grief
My Agnes turned, as if afraid,
For shelter and relief,
Seeking through all her life to dwell
Within a narrow convent cell,
Because, she said in brief,
Grief makes the deafen'd ear to hear
God's disregarded voice sound clear.

But could *He* call her from my sight ?
My sore heart murmured Nay—

If in the silence of the night

His voice to me should say—

Wilt thou not now thy Lamb resign

To whom whose lamb was pierced for thine?

Then I could answer “*Yea.*”

I saw those long locks fall amain,

And hid my face, nor look’d again.

But never would my stately Clare

Have trod the convent’s path

But for the woe which came to her,

Woe that no fellow hath—

Into love’s crystal vase she pour’d

Her soul, and then a sharp-edged sword

(O, was it sent in wrath?)

Shivered the goblet, and the wine

Was spilt that she had deemed divine.

I thought—it was a natural thought—

That on her mother’s breast

The anguish in her soul enwrought

Would find its utterance best.

The nestling seeks the parent wing

When from the tempest cowering;

The wounded fawn hath prest

Against the tender, dappled side

That warmth in happier hours supplied.

She said—the open convent door
Invited to repose ;
And her young feet were wounded sore
Upon life's way—she chose—
How could I stand 'twixt rest and her ?
I thanked God that He yet would spare
Amidst my thickening woes,
My loveliest bud with me to bide,
Unlured to leave her mother's side.

Ora pro mihi—Saints below
Aid me, and saints above—
O Lord of all, look on my woe,
Let me thy mercy prove—
By thy own motherhood divine
Mary, I ask thee, pity mine
Where unrebuked is love.
My little one, my Amy sweet
Followed where led her sisters' feet.

Why tell me they are “ brides of heaven ” ?
Alas ! that it should be,
Lord, Thou art love, and is love given
To lead away from Thee ?
Father and mother, husband, wife,
Children—these words are words of life ;
And can it, should it be

Such bonds are burst by human breath,
Not only by the hand of death ?

We read that at a wedding feast
The Master deigned to be ;
And knew Him well as loving guest
The home at Bethany.
And why should convent cell become
More holy than a holy home ?
Surely so thought not He
Who childhood bless'd, and bridal graced,
Nor in the Christ the Son effaced.

Father, the mother's heart forgive,
The wayward human pride
That longed that I—one child—might live
To see an earthly bride ;
That longed to deck an earthly bower
With one immortal, fadeless flower,
Yet had I not denied
To thee its sweetness, if Thy love
Had claimed it for the courts above.

I of the Jewish mother thought
Who, in the days of old,
Her lambkin to the altar brought
Leaving an empty fold,—

The father climbing Mount Moriah
To lay his life's life on the pyre ;
 The bitterness untold
That makes all other anguish dumb,
Of David's wail o'er Absalom,

What if she should repent, and feel
 Tired in heart and soul ?
What if the tears unnoticed steal
 And none her grief console ?
What if she mourn that she pass'd o'er
A gulf that she can cross no more,
 So high the billows roll ?
What if she stretch her arms to grasp
The mother yearning for that clasp ?

Her happy tones seem still to float
 Through all the silent rooms ;
Of her lost songs each bird-like note—
 Like dying, faint perfumes
Of faded flowers—seem lingering yet
Where once that airy step was set ;
 Unmark'd her rose-tree blooms,
The leaves upon the ground may stay
That erst upon her bosom lay.

I marvel not the broken heart
 The convent's shade may find

A refuge meet, where it apart
 Its bleeding wound may bind ;
But she that on my widow'd breast
Lay like a tranquil babe at rest,
 O, can she be resigned ?
Can such vocation God's call be ?
Lord, did the summons come from Thee ?

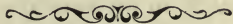
I have not offer'd—God hath seen—
 That which has cost me nought :
Dyed with my heart's best blood have been
 The gifts that I have brought ;
And were I sure God claimed the loan,
Then would I hush this ceaseless moan,
 But ever comes the thought,
Did not the Church tear from Thy side
What God permitted there to bide ?

One foolish fear my heart broods o'er,
 Nor can I break its chain,
That when upon the painless shore
 I meet my child again,
'Twill be a nun's sad, patient face
Will lift itself to my embrace,
 And I—weak heart and vain,
Alas ! that such a wish should be—
I want the child that went from me.

The dead seem than the living now
More near—the land of dreams
Restores my husband's voice and brow,
Unseals joy's singing streams—
The years roll back their load of strife,
Wealthy as mother and as wife
How full my gladness seems—
Still true the blessèd word doth keep,
He giveth His beloved in sleep.

And deeper sleep I think will yield
All I have lost again
Where secret things shall be reveal'd,
And mysteries made plain ;
Where ties that life hath rudely rent,
And sacred ties it never lent,
Shall form one "golden chain"—
The bliss whose seed was lost below,
There in full ear be found to grow.

(Note E.)



TO THE MEMORY OF W. C.

ONCE more I trod thy garden walks
 When all around was fair,
 When many-colour'd, fragrant flowers
 With perfume filled the air—
 The roses to thy window climb'd;
 And Evening tranquilly
 Shed its soft, chasten'd light o'er scenes
 Thou never more might see.

The spot that ne'er again should make
 Thy gentle spirit glad—
 And yet for those who die like thee
 We hardly should be sad;
 Not for the hoary head that wore
 A crown of righteousness,
 Whose life fill'd more than fourscore years,
 Who lived to love and bless.

'Twas beautiful to see thee stand
 Between the earth and heaven,
 Loving the flowers, the sunshine bright,
 All gifts that God had given,

Lending to childhood's joyous mirth
A gentle, gracious eye—
A thankful, cheerful heart was thine,
Ready to live or die.

For many years o'er waters still
It was thy lot to glide,
And Jesus was thy pilot there,
Thy safe, unerring guide;
No stormy breakers rose between
Thy haven's rest and thee—
Softly the night's dark shadows fell
Upon a quiet sea.

Those shadows were not lifted here,
Beneath their cloud didst thou
Pursue the path no foot hath trod,
No mortal eye may know—
No glance of love could follow thee
On that mysterious track,
Nor see thee gain the "further shore,"
From which none cometh back.

If once that fair, immortal land
Our dim sight could behold,
Once see within the gates of pearl,
Beyond the walls of gold—

But for a moment could it rest
On that untravelled shore,
Who then would fear the dark, lone way
That leads there any more?

It may not be—nor may our lost
Speak from that glorious land,
Nor may they stretch to us below
An aiding, strengthening hand.
Could these things be—then e'en on earth
We might o'ermaster Death,
And we should walk by sight, nor need
The strong, sure arm of Faith.

Yet we believe that they are blest
That heavenly home who share;
That e'en our love could lure them not
To leave the glory there—
The sinless could not stoop to drink
Again the cup of sin;
The conquerors would not leave their crowns
Again the fight to win.

We speak of flowers that never fade,
Of skies for ever bright,
Of summers that no winter dread,
Of day without a night—

And yet we know that still we fail
The beauty to unfold ;
That human heart hath ne'er conceived,
Nor angel language told.

Yet, aged Pilgrim, these are things
Familiar grown to thee ;
Twelve months have past, since from the flesh
Thy spirit was set free—
What varied scenes have we beheld
Within their narrow range ;
Grief, joy, and death, and war, and strife,
And never-ending change.

How differently the year hath sped
O ransomed one, with thee,
For whom Time's river hath been merged
In the Eternal sea.
The doubt, perplexity, and care
That here the spirit prove,
All swallow'd in a soundless deep
Of Knowledge and of Love.

The roses in thy garden soon
Will droop and die away,

But where thou art there comes no trace
Of ruin or decay—
Where words like these are never said
Thou shalt for ever dwell,
Nor wilt thou prize Heaven's blessings less
For loving Earth's so well.



“ LIKE AS A FATHER PITIETH.”

“ Like as a Father pitieth.”

“ As one whom his Mother comforteth.”

LIKE as a Father pitieth—

O, Lord, if this be so

Surely there is in life, in death,

A balm for every woe.

A love that all things can forgive,

That “loveth to the end,”

That doth the Prodigal receive

When home his footsteps tend ;

The father’s arms are opened wide,

And, folded to his breast,

The guiltiest there his shame may hide,

The weariest there may rest.

Divinest pity flings a veil

The dreary past before,

And of the dark and gloomy tale

Makes mention never more.

The robe, the covenanting ring,

The place resumed again—

O, Lord, if *such* Thy pitying

It cannot be in vain.

Like as a Mother comforteth—
 O, Lord, if this be so,
 Surely there is in life, in death,
 A balm for every woe.
 What tender as a mother's touch
 On wailing infant laid?—
 Lord, if Thy hand on us is such,
 Why should we be afraid?
 Safe in her clasp a perfect cure
 The little child doth find
 For hurt or broken toy, a sure
 Healing for heart and mind.
 The mother's voice lulls pain to sleep,
 Alike it soothes and cheers,
 Her lips press'd on the eyes that weep
 Will charm away the tears—
 The magic of a mother's kiss:—
 O, Lord of quick and dead,
 Surely if such Thy comfort is
 We *shall* be comforted.



RUGBY CHAPEL.

WE stept within the low church-door,
Where hush'd and reverently we trod,
Because our feet were passing o'er
The grave of a true saint of God.

No mere lip-service to the Lord
Was his, but steadfast in the strife,
Loyal in heart, with hand on sword—
We thank our God for such a life.

Greatness beneath the Cross that grew
To stature that all men could see,
That far and wide its blessing threw—
We thank our God for such as he.

Not length of day, but hours of light
Gave him a harvest rich to reap—
Upon the noon came down the night—
He walked with God—then fell asleep.



“IT IS VAIN FOR YOU TO RISE UP EARLY,
TO SIT UP LATE.”

To rise up early is in vain,
We cannot find that which we seek ;
The dew upon the fields may lie,
The lark be singing in the sky,
The Morning's breath may kiss the cheek:—
It is in vain—we cannot rise
So early as in anywise
To find that something which we seek.

It is in vain to sit up late
Looking for that which cometh not ;
'Tis vain till midnight hour to wait,
No knock comes to the spirit's gate
To break the stillness of our lot.
The lamp burns dim, the oil is spent,
Dawn in the East a way hath rent,
But what we seek still cometh not.

It is in vain, it is in vain—
The ages echo back that word ;
It is the old, unvarying strain,
Unto success the sad refrain,
The knell it hath so often heard ;

But even as evermore again
Comes a clear shining after rain,
So is there light behind that word.

We are disquieted in vain,
Earth gives not what it ne'er possest :
The peace we crave for ne'er took root
In mortal soil, nor mortal fruit
Hath borne. God only gives that rest—
His everlasting arms around,
Our quiet hands no more are found
Clasping the thorn that wounds the breast.



INCREASE OUR FAITH.

INCREASE our faith, O Lord !—falls not
The thunderbolt—hast Thou forgot
The world Thou mad'st, that wrong should be
So oft triumphant? that we see
Men flaunt Thy banner far and near,
Yet fight against Thy kingdom here,
Allied with evil, scorning light :—
When our souls sicken at the sight,

Increase our faith.

When to the hapless peasant's home
We hear the fiendish spoiler come,
And see the murdered children lie
Beneath the bright, uncloven sky
That looks as calmly on the scene
As where on mossy woodland green
The little dancing footsteps go :—
Lord, when we see these things are so,
Increase our faith.

When to thy humbler living things
To whom men should be bounteous kings,

They wield instead a tyrant's sway,
Profane the kingdom day by day
For greed ; or where, far more abhorr'd,
Science usurps Thy throne, O Lord,
With blood-stain'd sceptre, and doth treat
Thy mercy's law as obsolete :—

Increase our faith.

How long, O Lord, how long ? that cry
For ages has gone up on high ;
And Thou dost hear—'tis ours to fight
All powers of darkness, though the night
May gather, and we cannot see
Our Leader ; yet we know that He
Is ever near—Comes daylight, when
The gloom will vanish—until then

Increase our faith.



“LET THINE EYES LOOK RIGHT ON, AND
LET THINE EYELIDS LOOK STRAIGHT
BEFORE THEE.”

“ Would you be young again ?
So would not I.
One tear to memory given,
Onward I'd hie.

* * * *

If you could, would you now
Retrace the way ? ”

Baroness Nairn.

OH, to be young once more,
The glory all before,
As in the days of yore,
Tired heart of mine ;
When gladdened and amazed,
By very brightness dazed,
With shaded eyes we gazed
Future, on thine.

Would'st thou be young once more,
The glory all before ?
Pause for a moment o'er
That wish of thine—

Do Memory's glances find
The splendours now *behind*,
Which to thy youthful mind
Before did shine ?

Nay, for a wandering light,
It danced before my sight,
A glory infinite,
But ne'er attained ;
Yet then the present, too,
With the reflected hue,
Such untold brilliance knew
That all seem'd gain'd.

'Twas possible to climb
The hardest hill that time,
That brought the heavenly clime,
As seem'd, more near.
Our faces sunward turn'd,
A brightness on them burn'd
By elder eyes discern'd
With mournful fear.

But would'st thou tread in pain
Those stony paths again
From that enchanted plain
That now withhold ?

Would'st thou the past retrace,
Sad hour, and haunted place,
Each by-gone care wouldst face,
A tale twice told ?

Nay, if that be the price,
One hour of Paradise,
And then with aching eyes
To wait outside,
Still blinded with the glow
Of light we used to know,
That nevermore shall show
Our steps to guide ;

Oh, it would be too hard—
No need of angel ward,
With flaming sword, as guard
Without to stand—
Who, who would twice live o'er
The grief, the pain of yore ?—
O Youth, we never more
Walk hand in hand.

Yet turn not thou away :—
Gold tints give place to grey,
But not for mirth and play
Life here is cast—

It is a battle-field ;
And, borne on conqueror's shield,
They who nor flee nor yield
Come home at last.

There, with exceeding gain
Where there is no more pain,
Thou shalt be young again,
Ne'er to grow old—
The glory not before,
But round thee evermore,
Undying splendours pour
A light sevenfold.



“I WILL GIVE YOU A MOUTH AND
WISDOM.”

WHEN the weary thousands gathered
Destitute of bread and meat,
Came the mandate of the Master :
“ Give ye them to eat.”

“ We have nothing here ”—the answer—
“ But five loaves and fishes twain,
What are they among so many ? ”—
Then He spake again :

“ Make the men sit down by fifties ” :—
And He brake the food and blest,
Handing it to the disciples
Let them do the rest.

Still to His commissioned servants
Where the hungering thousands meet
Comes the mandate of the Master :
“ Give ye them to eat.”

And how oft the heart replieth—
“ Lord, my store is very small,
Scarcely for myself sufficing—
Can it feed them all ? ”

Still the same voice, only louder,
 Doth the fainting listeners greet,
 With no word of explanation :
 " Give ye them to eat."—

Know ye not ye fearful servants,
 His alone is all the store ?
 And your part is but to give it
 As He hands it o'er ?

As of old the hungering thousands
 Shall be filled and satisfied,
 And for you abundant fragments
 Will be saved beside.



BUNSEN'S DYING WORDS.

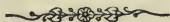
"It is sweet to die. . . . Upwards, upwards, heavenwards! Not darkness, no; it is becoming ever more and more light around me. . . . There is only one—Christ in God. Have you any doubts? I have none."

WHAT was it thou couldst see
As Death's cold hand was stealing to thy heart?
What was it dawn'd on thee
As the soul hover'd, ready to depart?

Life's hieroglyphic page
Read heretofore in part, perplexedly,
On th' sudden by some sage
Made luminous and clear before the eye?

Nay, more than this—for thee
A fold was lifted of the veil that hides
The Holiest, thou couldst see
Somewhat of that it still from us divides.

Henceforth shall we not bow
In humble faith to mysteries dark as death,
When we see such as thou
Sounding all depths, find solid Rock beneath?



A PAGAN CREED IN A CHRISTIAN LAND.

HE is down—he has broken the law—

Let us set all the hounds on his track ;
 Let us search through his life for each flaw,
 No matter how far we go back.

Let us hunt through his boyhood and youth,
 His childhood, if so it may be ;
 Though not half of the tales may be truth
 They will help out the good cause you see !

All are sinners ?—Well, yes, the same name,
 But men such as he we condemn,
 Involved in dishonour and shame,
 We have nothing in common with them.

As long as the man had a board
 With silver and glass well supplied,
 With all viands that wealth could afford
 No need to ask questions aside,

How they got there—but all is changed now
 When to trial his actions they bring,
 For *convict* sounds desperately low,
 It is now such a different thing.

I would not be hard, understand,
 On a slight over-reaching or so,
 If one wants to be wealthy off-hand,
 For one *must* get wealth *somehow*, you know.

One must tell a lie now and then,
 And injure one's neighbour sometimes,
 Only choosing the how and the when—
 But I own I've no patience with crimes.

If like us he had but been content
 To cheat in respectable ways,
 In quiet his life he had spent,
 And peace to the end of his days.

Of course I am not so absurd
 As to think we were meant to obey
 New Testament laws—that its word
 Should influence us day by day.

To think of forgiving one's foe,
 Doing as you'd be done by, your rule—
 All right to believe it you know,
 But who acts on it, saving a fool?

My rivals, *my* enemies, name?
 I will never forgive; but you see
 I can my forgiveness proclaim
 For those who have never hurt *me*.

My confession of faith you have heard,
And the rule of my conduct thereby—
The standard that I have declared
Is not unapproachably high.

And when the next Sunday begins
Let us kneel (for the whole need no cure)
Not to ask for forgiveness of sins,
But to thank God that we are so pure,

And to pray that His blessing be given
To selfishness, cunning, and greed—
That His will be *not* done as in Heaven,
That His kingdom may *not* come indeed.



A QUESTION.

“I did not long to go to rest,
 I longed for rest to come to me.”
T. T. Lynch.

WHAT if, while men the common round
 Of business and of pleasure went,
 All things as from Creation found,
 The clouds should suddenly be rent,
 And in like manner He should come
 As once from earth He went away,
 And we—with wonder stricken dumb—
 Would we rejoice or fear that day?

Say, would our faith with one great bound
 Rise up that hour supreme to greet?
 And while all lowly on the ground
 We laid us at those sacred feet,
 Would quivering lips most meekly say:
 “Although I feared to go to Thee,
 Yet, strengthened by this wondrous day,
 I fear not Thou shouldst come to me?”

“ The shafts of doubt that once pierced deep
Are gone as though they never were ;
I know that Thou wilt safely keep
What I committed to Thy care.
I come, the poorest of the poor,
A suppliant at Thy feet I lie,
And yet, because Thy word is sure
My trembling heart with hope beats high.

“ For now Thou com'st to us with clouds,
That our weak sight Thy face may see,
Each sophistry the heart enshrouds,
Each false excuse, each selfish plea
Fly like the mist before the sun,
They cannot bear Thy searching light,
All refuges of lies are gone,
Earth's thousand wrongs Thou com'st to right.”

Then if, while men the common round
Of business and of pleasure went,
All things as from Creation found,
The clouds should suddenly be rent,
Revealing Him, who always near,
If seen, had blinded eyes so dim,
And if that Coming brought no fear,
Why should we fear to go to Him?

TO THE YOUNG REJOICING IN THEIR YOUTH.

BEHOLD yon rill that sparkles on

With ceaseless sound, so crystal clear
That, as through glass, when looking down
Thou seest all fair things slumbering there.

But mark,—with time that stream will flow,
With larger flood in deeper bed,

And treasures will lie hid below

Thou reck'st not of, with careless tread
Who passest by. So, hot young heart,
The surface near thy good things lie;
The larger store of age apart

Deep waters cover from thine eye.

Who doubts that young corn in the ear

Is less than fields to harvest white?—
That fruitage of the waning year

Is more than spring-tide blossoms bright?
All have their fitness—but the wise

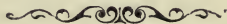
Grow wiser as Time on doth sweep.
And thou, whose keen and youthful eyes
See quickly, dost not see so deep.

And thou hast many things to learn—

Outward and inward—long since taught
By Time to some, mayest yet discern

What now out-distances thy thought.

And therefore Wisdom's words to thee have said
Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head.



IN MEMORIAM.

THE eye that would have look'd most lovingly
 Upon these pages, these shall never see—
 Yet how the life-long habit now forego
 Which still appeal'd to thee? certain to know
 Full sympathy—but no response will come
 Henceforth. How is it the beloved are dumb
 Who wept to see us weep?—we cry for one,
 Only one word to soothe, and there is none.
 How can they bear our woe? Is it being sure
 That though our weeping for a night endure
 Joy cometh with the morning, they can keep
 Silence a little space, can see us weep?
 Even as tender mothers with a smile,
 Heedless of passionate infant wail the while,
 Snatch the sharp, dangerous toy, because they know
 Laughter will sound ere tears have ceased to flow.
 So is it with our Dead? Can they behold
 Our sorrow calmly for the manifold
 Blessings to come? A moment's loneliness
 And desolation, in our sore distress
 Craving for comfort—and then tears all dried,
 And hearts made whole upon "the other side"?

Mother in all but name—there is none left
 To prize as thou hadst prized this book; bereft
 Of the dear utterance of thy sympathy,
 I link these pages with thy memory.

NOTES.

NOTE A.—pp. 21 and 22.

Verse 14.—“Haply the wonders to behold,

“A boy, ’mid other boys he came.—*Keble*.

Verse 15.—“ . . . the first word He uttered might
have told them all !—‘Children!’ ”—*Macduff*.

NOTE B.—p. 53.

Charles Brockbank, drowned by the upsetting of a boat in the Tay two days before. The minister referred to was the late Edwin Laundry.

NOTE C.—pp. 62 and 63.

“His death, however, at once put an end to that hesitation; . . . though not spectators of the tragedy they were somewhere in the immediate neighbourhood, waiting anxiously to learn the issue. . . . His (Joseph of Arimathea) dignity, the sense of shame, the fear of the Jews all forgotten.”—*Dr. Hanna*.

“ . . . though their loyalty to their Master remained, their faith in Him was altogether gone.”—*Bishop Temple*.

NOTE D.—p. 78.

Part of this piece was unconsciously suggested by one hearing of a short poem on the same subject, by George Macdonald—which contains the lines :—

“And so thy maidens’ gathered tale
For thee with wonder teems,” &c.

NOTE E.—pp. 114 and 116.

Professor Plumptre has a remark to the effect that—of all the merely human anguish recorded in the Bible, there is nothing to compare with David’s anguish for his son.

He giveth his beloved *in* sleep—is one version of the passage.

ERRATA.

Page 111, 3rd line, for Lamb, read *lamb*.

„ „ 4th „ for To whom whose lamb, read *To Him whose Lamb*

„ 115, 15th „ for Thy, read *thy*.

YB 79830

